

[Home](#)

[The Gift of Salvation](#)

[Exploring Christianity](#)

[The Christian Life](#)

[Free Bible Studies](#)

[Doctrines & Insights](#)

[Prophecy Studies](#)

[Contemporary Issues](#)

[Wordwise Hymns BLOG](#)

[Church Ministry](#)

[Music & Services](#)

[Hymn Stories](#)

[Free Newsletter](#)

[Questions from You](#)

[Link to Us](#)

[About This Website](#)

[Donate](#)

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

Prophecy Studies - No. 2

The Chosen People of God (Israel, cf. Deut. 7:6) is important in prophecy. Have you ever met a Babylonian? Or an Assyrian? Or a Philistine? Or an Amalekite? Probably not. In ancient times those were significant groups of people. But they are all gone now. That is one thing that makes the story of Israel and the Jews the most remarkable saga in the history of world nations. It is not a very big country. All of Israel would fit inside our little province of New Brunswick--yet it is constantly in the news.

When the Israelites finally reached Canaan, they were to present the firstfruits of their initial crop to the Lord, saying, "My father was a Syrian [or an Aramean], about to perish, and he went down to Egypt and dwelt there, few in number; and there he became a nation great and mighty, and populous" (Deut. 26:5). The reference is to Jacob and his wanderings. And when he and his family were about to perish in a famine, God providentially arranged for them (through Jacob's son Joseph) to go and live in Egypt. There they multiplied, and yet, certainly by today's standards, they were still few in number.

But no other nation, big or small, has survived 4,000 years of trouble and oppression, remaining all the while a major focus of world affairs. This study will explore why that is so, as we take a look at what God has to say about this nation. He has called her "Israel My glory" (Isa. 46:13). No proper understanding of prophecy can be achieved without including God's plan and program for Israel.

Israel was given many specific blessings not enjoyed by other nations. They were to have God dwelling in their midst, specially accessible to them (Exod. 25:21-22; Deut. 4:7). To that nation God revealed His Holy Word, the Old Testament (Rom. 3:1-2), and they were to be His witnesses to the idolatrous nations around (Isa. 43:10). With Israel, God made a number of important covenants, including the Mosaic Law (Deut. 4:8; Rom. 9:4), and through that nation Christ came to be a blessing to all mankind (Rom. 9:5).

1) What reason does God give for this special treatment that others did not receive (Deut. 7:6-8; or see 4:37)?

2) And what later reason does God give for His unique blessing of these people (Rom. 9:9-12)?

INSIGHT: The Lord first showed His grace and love to one man, in approximately 2000 BC. That man was a Babylonian (or Chaldean) named Abram (or Abraham). According to Joshua 24:14 it seems that Abraham, like the rest of his family, was an idolater before God appeared to him. He did not earn God's favour by how he was living. It was bestowed as an act of sovereign grace.

"Abram" means *Exalted Father*. God later changed this to "Abraham," meaning *Father of a Multitude*, as a reminder of His promise to make of him a great nation. This promise and others are contained in an often-repeated covenant that has come to be known as the Abrahamic Covenant. Beyond some personal blessings for Abraham, the covenant includes three main promises.

3) What is one pledge God makes in this covenant (Gen. 12:2a)?

4) What is a second pledge God makes (Gen. 12:3b)?

5) The third pledge is merely suggested in Genesis 12:1, but it is later explained in greater detail. What is it (Gen. 12:7; 3:14-15)?

6) How long was the land of Canaan to belong to Israel (Gen. 13:15; or 48:3-4)?

7) What warning and promise does the Abrahamic Covenant contain regarding how other peoples are to relate to Israel (Gen. 12:3a; or see Zech. 2:8-9)?

INSIGHT: This enduring ownership of Canaan needs to be qualified. First, since we are later taught that God is going to create a new heavens and a new earth (II Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1), words like “forever” must be understood in that context to mean for all time, or as long as this present earth endures. (That is later explained through the prophet Jeremiah, Jer. 31:35-37.) Second, Israel’s *right* to the land does not necessarily mean she will dwell in the land without interruption. As we shall see, the people’s enjoyment of that privilege depended on certain conditions. But the land remains theirs by divine covenant, even when sin robs them of the blessing of it.

INSIGHT: The importance of the Abrahamic Covenant can be seen in the fact that it is repeated several times through the book of Genesis (15:5, 18-21; 18:17-18; 50:24). It is confirmed to Isaac (Gen. 26:3, 24) and Jacob (Gen. 28:13-14). Then, as the Old Testament revelation unfolds, each of the three main promises is reinforced and expanded by another covenant: the promise of the Land, in the Palestinian Covenant; the promise of descendants (seed) in the Davidic Covenant; the promise of blessing for all nations in the New Covenant.

The Palestinian Covenant is found in Deuteronomy 29-30, with Chapter 28 a closely related preparation for it. It spells out the conditions under which Israel will actually be allowed to dwell in the Land and enjoy its bounty.

8) What would cause the Lord to uproot them from the Land (Deut. 29:24-28)?

9) And what would cause the Lord to bring them back to the Land again (Deut. 30:1-2)?

INSIGHT: The Abrahamic Covenant promises that a great nation would come from Abraham. Later the “seed” promise focuses on one particular family line in that nation in the “Davidic Covenant” (II Sam. 7:1-17). In that, there is a play on words using the word “house.” God promises that David’s son, Solomon, would build a house for Him (Israel’s temple in Jerusalem). And God promises that He is going to raise up a “house” for David (meaning, in this case, a family, a royal dynasty to sit upon Israel’s throne).

10) How long is this royal line to last (II Sam. 7:16)?

11) Based on Isaiah’s prophecy, who is it that will ultimately fulfil this promise (Isa. 9:6-7)?

INSIGHT: Because of repeated sin, God judged the Jews by allowing the Babylonians to carry them off into bondage. With the Babylonian Captivity, the throne of Israel became empty. When the Jews returned from 70 years in bondage, they had no king. But that was not the end of the promise to David. The One Isaiah speaks of still has a right to the throne. And Amos prophesies that David’s dynasty will be restored in the end times (Amos 9:8-15).

12) When the monarchy is restored (Amos 9:11) what great promise is going to be fulfilled at the same time (vs. 15)?

13) According to the following verses, what will the living conditions be like for Israel at that time?

13b) Amos 9:14 (or see Isa. 35:1-2; Joel 3:17-18)

13c) Isa. 2:2-4

13d) Isa. 11:6-9

INSIGHT: Sometimes it is suggested that perhaps Israel lost all of these promised blessings, because of her disobedience. It is supposed that after her captivity in Babylon at the end of the Old Testament she could no longer look forward to the fulfilment of these covenants. Yet the New Testament continues to predict these same blessings. Stephen draws particular attention to them before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:2-5).

14) Who was the Davidic Covenant confirmed with in the New Testament? And by whom (Lk. 1:26, 30-33)?

15) What petition in the Lord's prayer is related to this promise (Matt. 6:10)?

16) Christ is not yet sitting on the Davidic throne He has been promised. Whose throne does He occupy at the present time (Rev. 3:21)?

INSIGHT: Others have suggested that by crucifying her Messiah-king, Israel has lost any hope of this promise being fulfilled. But Christ does not say this. When, after His resurrection, the disciples ask when His earthly kingdom will be set up. He only says, "It is not for you to know the times..." (Acts 1:6-7). Even after Calvary, the covenant with David's family is stated again as having a future fulfilment (Acts 15:13-18).

17) How do you know that the crucifying of His Son did not catch God by surprise (Acts 15:18)?

INSIGHT: Something important did happen after Calvary, however. Something that affected the present place of Israel. On the Day of Pentecost described in Acts Chapter 2, God set His plan for Israel aside temporarily, and created a new body, the church of Jesus Christ. In it, Jew and Gentile are united on a equal footing (I Cor. 12:12-13). This arrangement is to remain in place "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in" (Rom. 11:25). Then Christ will return. At that time Israel will be restored and revived, and God will fulfil His many earthly promises to her (Rom. 11:26-29).

18) What is the reason we can count on this to happen (Rom. 11:29)?

INSIGHT: One aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant remains to be considered—the promise of blessing to "all the families of the earth." Though the covenant was made with Israel, this particular promise is too great to be contained by one nation. It spills over and blesses us all. This is also seen in the companion covenant, called the New Covenant. It was definitely made with Israel (Jer. 31:31), and its national and physical promises to Israel include her final and permanent possession of the Land of Promise (Jer. 31:38-4). Ezekiel's statement of these spiritual blessings is likewise tied to her occupation of the land (Ezek. 36:24-28). However, the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant spill over and bless all mankind.

19) What kind of spiritual blessings are included in the New Covenant (Jer. 31:33-34)?

20) What further promise does God make through Ezekiel (Ezek. 36:27)?

21) According to the following verses, how do we know that these spiritual blessings of the New Covenant are also meant for us today—even if we are not Jews?

21b) Who is the Mediator of the New Covenant (Heb. 9:15)? (A "mediator" is one who steps in to restore peace.)

21c) What gives Him this right (Lk. 22:20)?

21d) How is the New Covenant connected with our present service for Christ (II Cor. 3:5-6)?

INSIGHT: The point of this study has been to show something of the great promises

God has made to the nation of Israel. These “covenants” were made sovereignly, simply because God chose to do it, not because the nation had somehow earned His special favour. The prophesies relate to the Land of Canaan, and the Seed of Abraham. And yet, the spiritual blessings included in them bless all mankind. These are presently available to all, Jew and Gentile, through the church. But this in no way cancels those aspects of the covenants that are particularly national and earthly promises to Israel. In spite of Israel’s centuries of disobedience and unbelief, the promises will be fulfilled at Christ’s return, as later studies will show.

Share this page:



Facebook



Twitter



Google



Pinterest



Tumblr



Reddit

